

Chen, Isaac

From: Rusty Swafford - NOAA Federal <rusty.swafford@noaa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 06, 2017 11:00 AM
To: Chen, Isaac
Subject: Re: EFH Consultation for EPA R6 GMG290000 Oil and Gas General Permit

Dear Mr. Chen,

We have reviewed the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) assessment provided by your email correspondence dated August 29, 2017. The Water Division Director of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Region 6 is proposing to reissue a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) general permit for its jurisdictional area in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) of the Gulf of Mexico (General Permit No. GMG290000) for discharges in the Offshore Subcategory of the Oil and Gas Extraction Point Source Category (40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 435, subpart A). The EPA has determined that the minimal short-term impacts associated with the permitted NPDES discharges will not result in substantial adverse effects on EFH or managed species in any life history stage, either immediate or cumulative, in the project area. We concur with the EPA's assessment and agree the proposed mitigation measures to be incorporated into the permit will minimize adverse impacts to EFH or federally managed fisheries species. Therefore, no further EFH consultation is required for this proposed action.

If we can be of further assistance, please advise.

Rusty

On Tue, Aug 29, 2017 at 2:48 PM, Chen, Isaac <Chen.Isaac@epa.gov> wrote:

Hi, Rusty,

I am Isaac Chen, the permit writer of GMG290000. I did not initiate the EFH consultation earlier because I thought I might make a "no adversary impact" determination and then no need a consultation. But, I just learned that both BOEM and R4 made "would result in minimal short-term impacts" and did consultations for their actions. I am preparing a cover letter from my Associate Director to your office to request a concurrence of our determination or consultation. Would you please instruct me whom and where we shall send our request to? Attached please find a copy of EPA R6 EFH Assessment, draft permit and fact sheet. There will be some changes in the final permit. But all changes are not related to effluent limitations so will not affect our determination. Thanks for your help.

Isaac Chen

NPDES Permits & TMDLs Branch

Permitting Section

[\(214\) 665-7364](tel:(214)665-7364)

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Rusty Swafford
Supervisor, Gulf of Mexico Branch
Southeast Region, Habitat Conservation Division
NOAA Fisheries
U.S. Department of Commerce
4700 Av U, Galveston, TX 77551
Office: (409) 766-3699
FAX: (409) 766-3575
Rusty.Swafford@noaa.gov



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